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ABSTRACT

Participants in the workshop on literacy reported in this document included 15 educators and specialists from the Cook Islands, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, and Western Samoa. Chapter 1 reports an assessment of the present literacy situation in the South Pacific with particular attention to the problem of hidden illiteracy. Chapter 2 presents an outline of major strategic issues that must be addressed when a design for generating information is prepared; a draft of an interview schedule for strategically placed observers; and adaptable instruments for obtaining further information on the extent and nature of hidden illiteracy. Chapter 3 contains an agenda for action in each of the countries represented. The agendas address the current situation in each country, describe how the information collected will be used, and describe relevant international cooperation. Chapter 4 contains a formal statement prepared by the participants and entitled "Toward Full Literacy in the Pacific: The Apia Declaration." The appendices contain a list of participants and excerpts from the workshop's opening address presented by Patu Afaese, the Minister of Education, Western Samoa. (CML)

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ED309247

UNESCO OFFICE FOR THE PACIFIC STATES

TOWARD FULL LITERACY IN THE PACIFIC

Report of a Sub-Regional Workshop

on

Youth and Adults with Limited Literacy Skills

9 - 17 May 1988

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
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Apia, Western Samoa

May 1988

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FOREWORD

The document which follows records a number of important insights into the problems of hidden illiteracy in the Pacific and the decision taken or conclusions drawn. It is emphasized that it is not, nor was it intended to be, the record of an academic exercise. The process by which conclusions were reached and the instruments drawn up reflects the perceptions of largely generalist practitioners - persons responsible not only for literacy and reading in the Pacific but for many other aspects of island educations as well. The value of this document is thus not to be measured by the same yardstick used to evaluate a doctoral dissertation on the same subject. Rather, it documents variously, a joint learning process, a conceptual framework for further work in this field, and a joint commitment to resolving a problem which has been grossly underestimated and misunderstood until now. The report was prepared in its first draft by the two resource persons on the basis of text provided by selected participants forming a drafting committee. It was subsequently edited for style, consistency, and clarity. Other than that, all the ideas contained therein are those of the participants themselves.

As host for this meeting, the first of its type in the Pacific, the Unesco Office for the Pacific States cannot but be gratified by the unusually keen interest shown in the subject area not only by the participants but even by His Excellency, the Prime Minister of Western Samoa, Hon. Tofilau Eti Alesana, and by the Minister of Education, Hon. Patu Afaese. The Workshop was well-covered by the media but is a lesson for future efforts of this kind that the editors failed to make the connection that, in the final analysis, their own goals and those of the meeting converged since the concern was, after all, with increasing the reading public. Their first reaction was that the whole exercise was, at the bottom, politically motivated. The electronic media, conversely, was ironically more receptive. Radio Australia used the full text of the press release prepared for the occasion on their widely listend to **World and Pacific News Programme**.

As a final word, it is necessary to record Unesco/SOPAC's appreciation for the excellent collaboration of the two resource persons, Dr. Francis Mangubhai, a Fiji citizen and Fellow of the University of the South Pacific's Institute of Education, specializing in linguistics and language teaching, and Dr. Arthur

Gillette, literacy and adult education specialist attached to Unesco Headquarters in Paris. The workshop was styled as a meeting of peers and indeed it was but there is not doubt that the structure and momentum of the work benefitted generally from their considerable experience with the problem of hidden illiteracy, both in the Pacific and the World.

F.L. Higginson
Chief of Mission
Unesco Office for the Pacific States
Apia, Western Samoa.

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INTRODUCTION

1. Background

Unesco has a long-standing mandate to train literacy personnel. In this biennium,*/ activities are being undertaken to contribute to enhancing the capacity of relevant personnel in the Pacific sub-region to understand and come to grips with problems arising from the existence of limited literacy skills among individuals and groups. As part of this programme, a Sub-Regional Workshop to examine the nature and extent of the problem of Youth and Adults with Limited Literacy Skills was organized in Apia, Western Samoa by the Unesco Office for the Pacific States in cooperation with the Western Samoa Department of Education.

2. Objectives

The Workshop, was designed to enable participants to:

- improve their knowledge and understanding of the nature and role of literacy in the world and their sub-region;

- explore the nature, scope, causes and impact of limited literacy skills and the extent of what has been termed "hidden illiteracy" in the world and their sub-region;

- develop some understanding of the strategies and mechanisms by which data on literacy and illiteracy can be gathered.

- provide some experience of creating practical instruments for collecting such data.

- become acquainted with and understand the theoretical underpinnings of different policies and strategies in industrialised and other developing countries with high schooling rates designed to enhance the provision of basic and remedial literacy and to offer new literates a broad range of organised opportunities to maintain, develop and apply their literacy skills;

- gain insights into both the importance of organizing a coherent set of actions to promote reading within post-literacy policies and strategies as well as the difficulties in doing so, these insights being considered as the necessary foundation for their involvement in the Primary Reading Materials project;

- evolve national agendas of action to attack the problem of limited literacy in their home contexts.

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*/ Sub-programme II.1.3 of Unesco's Programme and Budget for 1988-89.

3. Venue and Dates

The Sub-Regional Workshop took place from 9 to 17 May 1988 at the Unesco Office for the Pacific States, in Apia, Western Samoa.

4. Participants

Fifteen educators and specialists from six Pacific countries (Cook Islands, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga and Western Samoa), two resource persons (from the University of the South Pacific and Unesco Headquarters) and one observer took part in the Workshop. (See List of Participants in Annexe I).

5. Programme and Methods of Work

Following a statement and welcome by Mr. F.L. Higginson, Chief of Mission, the Workshop was officially opened by Hon. Patu Afaese, Minister of Education of Western Samoa. Excerpts of his inaugural address are found in Annexe II of this Report. The Prime Minister of Western Samoa, Hon. Tofilau Eti Alesana, had kindly accepted the invitation to close the meeting in a special ceremony planned as a series of statements from selected participants with the Prime Minister reacting to them at the end but unexpected commitments compelled a last minute cancellation and the Honourable Minister of Education closed the workshop on his behalf.

The Workshop examined, by turns, the following main themes:

(a) Hidden illiteracy in the World and the Pacific;
(b) Expanding the information base - Approaches to obtaining further information?
(c) Literacy and post-literacy policies and strategies;
(d) The future: development of country agendas and a Pacific agenda.

In addition to video and oral presentations in plenary sessions, as well as site visits to strategically placed institutions to observe problems with literacy and sub-standard reading in Apia first hand, the Workshop operated through group work. Additional relevant documentation, mainly drawn from Unesco sources, was provided as reference material.

6. Results

The work output and conclusions of the Workshop are embodied in the present Final Report. They range from an assessment of the present literacy situation in the Pacific (Chapter I), and presentation of adaptable instruments for obtaining further information on the extent and nature of hidden illiteracy (Chapter II), to an outline of national agendas for action in each of the countries represented (Chapter III). Chapter IV contains a call to action, "Towards Full Literacy in the Pacific - the Apia Declaration".

CHAPTER II: ILLITERACY IN THE PACIFIC: TOWARD A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS

Following an introduction by the resource persons on the nature and scope of illiteracy in the world, the participants presented, in turn, their impressions of the situation in their own countries. An analysis of the material contained in their reports produced a generally enlightening overall picture of literacy in the Pacific.

1. Definition of Illiteracy

From the outset, the participants shared the premise of the organizers that it was necessary to be clear about the way the term "illiteracy" was to be used. The process of defining the term itself was instructive as it became clear to the meeting that a definition could have an applicability only in relation to a specific context. The Polynesian and Melanesian contexts were seen as differing greatly but the feeling was strong that a single definition which would embrace the Pacific States as a whole was preferable to a series of discrete statements. The definition eventually agreed upon was:

> **To be able to read, write and numerate with understanding, in order to meet one's daily needs to function in one's environment.**

In defining further the skills incorporated under the term "literacy", the participants drew a distinction between reading by simply "mouthing" the words, and reading with comprehension. Only those able to do the latter should be classified as literates. As for writing, the participants emphasized the affective aspect, namely the ability to convey one's feelings effectively through the written word.

2. Characteristics of Hidden Illiterates

In the absence of any verifiable data to support their views, participants had to resort to conclusions drawn from their own personal experiences involving "hidden illiteracy". Examples cited included the following:

- Age: some participants, pointing to the increasing universalization of primary education, felt that illiteracy was to be found primarily in the older age cohort of the population. Others, however, argued that the older generation had been well served by the missionaries and church groups who had instilled basic reading literacy for the purposes of reading the Bible and other religious writings.

- Sex. Still others cited the example of older Indian women in Fiji who were more likely to be illiterate than the older Fijian women, because, until the second half of this century, parents had not deemed it worthwhile to educate girls beyond a certain age.

- Geographical location. Some participants saw illiteracy as less of a problem in the rural areas than in the urban, largely because dropouts from school, who were high-risk illiterates, tended to drift to the urban areas. Others took the more traditional view that the conditions of the rural areas, with limited development and facilities, would be more likely to foster illiteracy.

Some characteristics of illiterates nevertheless produced a degree of consensus among participants.

- **Socio-economic background**. All agreed that the majority of illiterates were from the socially and economically disadvantaged strata. Conversely, they did not relate socio-economic disadvantages to the characteristics of certain groups of people but rather to geographical areas that were less developed than others.

- **Language background**. The participants suggested that multilingual countries in the South Pacific, particularly the Melanesian ones, were more likely to have problems than their Polynesian neighbours, but were unable to say which language group was of high risk.

- **Educational background**. While early primary school leavers were more likely to be or become illiterates, there were cases of functional illiterates at secondary and post-secondary levels also.

In searching to formulate a typology of the characteristics of hidden illiterates in the Pacific, the participants, who were unable to produce any verifiable hard data, bore witness to the generalized dearth of data on levels of literacy without which planners and policy makers could not carry out their tasks effectively. The resultant tentativeness of their discussions was stressed by some and acknowledged by all.

3. Major Causes of Hidden Illiteracy

A. Educational

Most participants considered illiteracy to be traceable to the failure of the school system to develope durable reading skills. By and large, schools were perceived as being geared towards those who learn easily, the slower learners being increasingly neglected as they moved from one level to another.

Several factors were considered to contribute to illiteracy:

Curriculum-related

- The syllabus was not properly followed by teachers, so that the stated objectives were frequently not achieved.

- School curriculum was frequently too exam-oriented, leading teachers to focus on those likely to pass, rather than those that needed most help in the class.

- Similarly, the curriculum was often too inflexible and thus not designed to cater for different types of learners.

Language-related

- English is an added language for most students and teachers in the Pacific. Many teachers, despite a poor grasp of English, nevertheless end up teaching it to students with predictable consequences.

- The dilemma is compounded in the multilingual countries of the South Pacific where the question of choice of idiom arises. In an urban environment, the solution has been to use English as the medium of instruction and the one through which reading is first learned. Children thus must acquire literacy through medium of their weaker language.

Teacher-related

- Many teachers do not know how to motivate their students to read. More seriously, a large number do not themselves read for pleasure or for information, nor do they personally value this activity.

- A lack of resourcefulness amongst many teachers is common. Many of the older ones have had a low level of education prior to their entry into a training college* and have had few opportunities for professional up-grading.

- Teacher training institutions do not sufficiently emphasize the importance of reading for learning, and with a prevalent imperfect understanding of the reading process, they are unable to prepare pre-service teachers appropriately.

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* Many teachers are still on post who have had no more than a Form III (Grade 9) education plus 2-year Teachers College

Management and Learning

Two factors contributing to illiteracy arise from the way the learning process is managed.

- Pupils are often promoted to the next level regardless of whether they have demonstrably acquired the necessary skills for that level.

- Many schools are "multi-grade" or composite". Unless well trained and highly motivated, a teacher runs the risk of devoting time to those who need no special attention at the expense of those who do.

B. Socio-Economic

While the participants highlighted some of the educational reasons for the development of hidden illiteracy, they also stressed that the roots of failure may derive from socio-economic issues as well.

Family

Family attitudes to reading clearly effect literacy skills as well:

- Many parents cannot or will not provide an educationally supportive environment at home, so a child encountering difficulties in any school subject including reading can expect little help.

- Attitudes to reading, especially reading for leisure, range from indifference to hostility.

- Reading materials in home are in short supply so that children have limited exposure to print before coming to school, or limited access to books after they have learned to read.

Community and Country

The participants emphasized the oral character of Pacific cultures which partially explained why reading was undervalued. The general lack of awareness of the importance of reading in educational - and other - settings resulted in a decreased empahsis on reading for pleasure or for personal education. These attitudes explain the often modest budgetary provisions made for reading materials for school children or for adults.

C. Availability of Reading Materials

The participants repeatedly empahsized the serious lack of reading materials which they saw as another major contributor to the phenomenon of hidden illiteracy in their islands.

- Vernacular language reading materials are in short supply throughout the region. While stories in the vernacular are written, great difficulty is experienced in getting them published: either they are not produced as part of a national reading programme and thus are outside national curriculum development programmes with no way to get in; or the small print runs increase the unit costs to unaffordable levels for the books, or again the Ministries simply have no money for printing despite the recognized value of the readers.

- More reading materials in the vernacular are available for adults than for children and what little exists is frequently of little intrinsic interest or educational value.

- Books available in English were frequently educationally inappropriate or culturally too foreign, further aggravating the problem of disinterest.

- Geographically isolated places within any Pacific State were particularly disadvantaged: distribution problems have been all but insurmountable to date.

3. Effects/Impacts of Hidden Illiteracy

The participants considered the effects or impacts of hidden illiteracy in terms of the following dimensions: personal growth, family life, civic life, economic life and cultural life.

A. Personal Growth

The following were thought to be the more salient effects or impacts of illiteracy on personal growth:

- Lack of self confidence and self-reliance, particularly in urban areas, in situations where literacy is required.

- The source of personal embarassment and humiliation, leading to an avoidance of involvement or participation in situations requiring literacy skills.

B. Family Life

Participants recalled the research correlating family life and the development of children's ability to read and write. Children who live in print-deprived homes are more likely to have difficulties in reading, particularly if individualized attention is missing in the classroom.

- Nonliterate parents in the islands, particularly those living in archipelago situations far from the main island, generally do not have printed material in their homes, thereby depriving their children of valuable pre-school

exposure to print.

- Parents' inability to read and the avoidance of situations likely to require that they do so together reduce the extent to which children engage in such activities. More importantly, as for so many other things, parents "role-model" their disinterest in reading which is then unconsciously acquired by their children. Only outside intervention can break the pattern.

C. Civic Life

Participants stressed literacy as a prerequisite for a full involvement in, and awareness of, civic life. Without it, one was dependent on what one was told by others about matters of regional and national interest and thereby denied the full exercise of one's rights and obligations as a citizen.

D. Economic Life

As elsewhere in the world, even those living on remote islands in the Pacific make use of herbicides and pesticides and they are the target groups for national efforts to develop the rural areas from the standpoints of production, health, communications, and the like. As such, their ability to read instructions, policy guidelines, and related materials is indispensable if they are to maximize their productivity and avoid harm to themselves and others.

E. Cultural Life

The negative effects of hidden illiteracy in the Pacific were frequently cushioned by the reliance on the spoken word and by the extended family systems. Pacific Island illiterates have access to some information orally and where literacy skills are required, members of their families can be called upon to transmit written information to them in oral form. Notwithstanding, it is increasingly recognized that history, legends and myths, transmitted only orally up until now, had to be recorded in writing before they were lost to future generations.

CHAPTER II: EXPANDING THE DATA BASE: APPROACHES TO OBTAINING FURTHER INFORMATION

A. General Considerations

Participants agreed that present knowledge about hidden illiteracy in the Pacific is incomplete and insufficiently systematic in the collection methods. In discussing options, it was felt that, initially, some idea of the situation could be gleaned from reading assessment tests used in schools.

Additional pertinent data could be obtained through follow-up or "tracer" testing of pupils later in their school carreers and after they have left school.

Along with school-related approaches to obtaining further information, a strategy and instruments for generating data on the problem in the society at large were needed. These considerations prompted participants to draw up an outline of major strategic issues that must be addressed when a design for generating information is being prepared. The outlines below, presented in tabular form as a checklist was recognized as essentially indicative, it not being possible to undertake an exhaustive review of the question in the short time available.

1. WHO NEEDS OR WANTS THE INFORMATION?

CONSUMER / LEVEL	MINISTRY OF EDUCATION	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE	CHURCH	OTHERS
POLICY MAKERS	-MINISTER -PERMANENT SECRETARY	-MINISTER -PERMANENT SECRETARY	-CHURCH COUNCIL	
PROGRAMME MANAGERS	-SCHOOL INSPECTORS -CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICERS	-SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS -EXTENSION OFFICERS	-CHURCH EDUCATION BOARD	
FIELD PERSONNEL	-TEACHERS	-FIELD OFFICERS	-PREACHERS -DEACONS	

1. Similarly any other appropriate Government Ministry or Department.
2. Includes other non-governmental agencies and organisations like women, youth, sports organisations, cultural groups, as well as the business community.

2. HOW WILL THE INFORMATION BE USED?

PASSIVE ←					→ ACTIVE	
USES OF INFORMATION / CATEGORY OF ADDRESSES	BACKGROUND INFORMATION	PUBLIC AND INDIVIDUAL AWARENESS & ATTENTION	CONVICTION & INTENSION TO START	PERSONAL PROFESSIONAL ACTION	NATIONAL APPROVAL	PUBLIC SUPPORT & FUNDING
DECISION MAKERS	X	X	X	X	X	X
IMPLEMENTORS	X	X	X	X		
FIELD LEVEL PEOPLE	X	X	X			

3. WHEN WILL THE INFORMATION BE NEEDED?

- Decision makers should be in possession of this data before a major decision is to be made to enrich the quality of the decision by strenghening the foundation on which it is based.

- Preparation of National Development Plans

- Preparation of UNDP Country Programmes

Meeting of multi and bilateral donor representatives

Bank Sectors studies

Annual General Meetings of non-governmental organisations, including Youth Groups

Important periodic gatherings of the business community.

Participants considered that International Literacy Day (September 8th each year) and International Literacy Year (1990) could be used as convenience symbolic time reference points for making survey results known.

4. HOW SHOULD THE INFORMATION BE PRESENTED?

- Formal written report with an executive summary and recommendations: for use in Cabinet submissions, Plan inputs, requests for external assistance, applied research, and contributions to regional

- studies: special presentation of results for release to the public through:

  : press
  : radio broadcasts
  : video
  : television

- discussion and negotiation with national and external bodies as a basis for future action.

- working papers for seminars and workshops.

5. WHERE SHOULD THE INFORMATION BE GATHERED?

- Since literacy is an intersectoral matter affecting the lives of all in both the public and private sectors, of every age and every calling, information about it should be disseminated as widely as possible and by all available means.

- Those who were interviewed to provide the baseline data should receive feedback on the study by those who conducted it.

- Not only the country itself but overseas, starting with the other countries in the Pacific sub-region, then to Asia and the world, with particular emphasis on other island groupings like the Caribbean and the Indian Ocean.

These measures are seen as necessary in order to interest potential aid donors.

With the strategy checklist in hand, the Workshop proceeded to elaborate the bases of three possible instruments for generating information on hidden illiteracy in Pacific Island States:

- an <u>interview schedule</u> for observers strategically placed to note the phenomenon in situations where reading and/or writing and/or numeracy are required;

- a <u>questionnaire</u> (to be applied in writing and/or orally) to assist in determining levels of literacy:

- and an individual literacy assessment instrument (requiring face-to-face application).

It was stressed that, like the previous section, these documents are only rough drafts prepared under the pressure of a short workshop and without reference to one specific situation. To be useful, they would need refinement and careful pre-testing in the settings where they will ultimately be used. The expanded and modified instruments could be used singly, in pairs, or as a group of three. Other instruments might also be developed. It was felt that the addition of different instruments would increase the reliability of the data collected on the phenomena of hidden illiteracy and hidden illiterates emerging from any national survey.

B. ORGEI INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR STRATEGICALLY PLACED OBSERVERS

1. Target Group

The informants should be persons in Government or the Community working or interacting with people in situations where some degree of literacy is believed to be required or desirable and where they are in a position to observe or hold views about their clients or interlocutors. The sample should be made up of men and women, of people from both the rural areas (where the vernacular is almost exclusively spoken) and the urban areas (where both English and the vernacular are spoken), and of people from every socio-economic level.

Typical examples of the most useful informants in the Pacific Islands are: pastors and Sunday-school teachers, traditional chiefs, heads of village women's committees, police constables, district and village government agents, youth club leaders, open-air market produce vendors, rural shopkeepers, officials working for Governments (Justice, Immigration, Labour, Health, Agriculture, Post Office) or for the private sector (insurance, private doctor's clinics), and for multi and bilateral aid programmes (resident overseas consultants, volunteers, Embassy/High Commission staff).

Since many respondents can be expected to be reluctant to disclose potentially embarrassing information which they feel might humiliate others or bring difficulties to themselves, the desirability of confidentiality must be assessed and if considered necessary, built into the entire interview process beginning with the selection of informants and continuing through the interview and subsequent treatment of the data. A first step might include a preliminary letter to the intended informant which, after defining hidden illiteracy, would then detail a number of questions that might be asked.

2. Background Information

SEX: AGE:

LEVEL OF EDUCATION:

OCCUPATION/POSITION:

SITUATION OF OBSERVATION (urban/rural):

HOW LONG IN THAT POSITION:

FREQUENCY OF OBSERVATION:

LANUGAGE OF LITERACY:

3. Observation of Problem

a) For what main purposes do people you observe use

- Reading?
- Writing?
- Numeracy?

b) Have you observed any problems in (circle "yes" or no")

- Reading? Yes/No
- Writing? Yes/No
- Numeracy? Yes/No

c) What kinds of problems do you notice in:

- Reading? (e.g. reads very slowly or does not comprehend printed material)
- Writing? (e.g. many spelling errors, no punctuation, ideas not in sequence, words nonsense)
- Numeracy? (e.g. recognizes numerals but cannot do simple calculations, incapable of doing more than two calculations)

d) How often do you notice these problems? (circle one)

Daily? Weekly? Monthly?

e) How bad/severe is the problem? (circle one)

Mild? Moderate? Very bad?

f) Frequency with which you see a person asking for help in:
(circle one)

- Reading: never/occasionally/frequently
- Writing: never/occasionally/frequently
- Numeracy: never/occasionally/frequently

If "occasionally" or "frequently", please provide examples.

g) For the people you observe having difficulty in reading writing and/or numeracy please indicate, to the best of your ability, their

- Age
- Sex
- Town or village dwellers
- Language
- Education level
- Work status (employed or unemployed)
- Source of income

4. Causes of the problem

h) In your opinion, what causes problems in reading and/or writing and/or numeracy? (e.g. physical handicap, laziness/carelessness, inadequate schooling, lack of opportunities for reading, writing and/or numeracy and others).

5. Impact of problem

i) In your opinion, how are lives of illiterate people affected by problems in

- Reading?
- Writing?
- Numeracy?

e.g. Family life? Village life? Job? Personal life?

6. Evolution of problem

j) In your opinion, are these problems (circle "yes" or "no")

a) getting worse
b) getting better
c) about the same

k) Are these problems affecting (circle one)

- more people?
- fewer people?
- the same number of people?

l) In your opinion, why are these changes taking place?

m) What other changes concerning reading, writing and numeracy do you see taking place?

7. Solutions to problem

14. Whatin your view should be done to overcome these problems?

15. Who should help to solve these problems?

8. Other

16. What, if any, additional comments do you wish to make?

B. DRAFT LITERACY LEVEL QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Covering Schedule

TARGET GROUP	-	30 years and over
POPULATION	-	Male and Female
LANGUAGE	-	English and Vernacular
GEOGRAPHY	-	Urban & Rural
PUBLICITY	-	Radio; Newspaper; Letter; Posters
CONTACTS	-	Head of State/ Ministers; Departmental Heads; CAOs; Pastors; Chiefs/Matais, Nobles/ Turaga ni Koros, etc.; School Principals; Youth Officers; Village Councils; Business Employers.
ISSUE	-	CONFIDENTIALITY

2. Preliminary tests

- Letter will be sent to contacts with a sample of the questionnaire to familiarise them about the exercise.

- The public will also be informed through radio broadcasts and the newspapers.

3. Draft Questionnaire

A. Background Information

AGE.....

SEX: MALE [ ]
FEMALE [ ]

MARITAL STATUS:
MARRIED [ ]
NEVER MARRIED [ ]
WIDOWED [ ]
DIVORCED [ ]

USUAL RESIDENCE

PLACE OF USUAL RESIDENCE: VILLAGE.....
ISLAND.....

(HOME) VILLAGE.....

LAST FORM/CLASS GRADE ATTENDED:.....

RELIGION:
CATHOLIC [ ]
METHODIST [ ]
L.D.S. [ ]
CONGREGATIONALIST [ ]
NONE [ ]
OTHER (SPECIFY).....

OCCUPATION
HOUSEWIFE [ ]
FARMER [ ]
LABOURER [ ]
UNEMPLOYED [ ]
OTHER (SPECIFY) .....

B. Reading

DO YOU HAVE ANY DIFFICULTY IN READING?

GREAT DIFFICULTY [ ]
SOME DIFFICULTY [ ]
LITTLE DIFFICULTY [ ]
NO DIFFICULTY [ ]

WHY DO YOU FIND READING DIFFICULT? (SPECIFY IF APPLICABLE)

.....
.....

ARE THERE THINGS TO READ WHERE YOU LIVE WHICH YOU ARE ALLOWED TO TAKE AND READ?

MANY	[ ]
SOME	[ ]
FEW	[ ]
NONE	[ ]

WHERE ARE THEY MOSTLY LOCATED

SCHOOL	[ ]
COMMUNITY LIBRARY	[ ]
PASTOR'S HOUSE	[ ]
HOME	[ ]
ELSEWHERE	[ ]

IF 'ELSEWHERE', SAY WHERE.....

HOW OFTEN DO YOU READ?

DAILY	[ ]
3-5 TIMES/WEEK	[ ]
ONCE FORTNIGHT	[ ]
RARELY OR NEVER	[ ]

DO YOU READ FOR:

ENJOYMENT	[ ]
KNOWLEDGE	[ ]
INFORMATION	[ ]

OTHER (SPECIFY).....

IF YOU READ, WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST?

MAGAZINES	[ ]
NEWSPAPERS	[ ]
COMICS	[ ]
NOVELS	[ ]
BIBLE STORIES	[ ]

OTHER (SPECIFY).....

C. Writing

DO YOU HAVE ANY DIFFICULTY IN WRITING?

GREAT DIFFICULTY	[ ]
SOME DIFFICULTY	[ ]
LITTLE DIFFICULTY	[ ]
NO DIFFICULTY	[ ]

IF YOU FIND WRITING DIFFICULT, PLEASE EXPLAIN WHY?

.....

.....

WHAT DO YOU WRITE?

LETTERS	[ ]
REPORTS	[ ]
STORIES	[ ]
SONGS	[ ]
OTHER (SPECIFY).....	

HOW OFTEN DO YOU WRITE?

DAILY	[ ]
3-5 TIMES/WEEK	[ ]
ONCE/FORTNIGHT	[ ]
RARELY OR NEVER	[ ]

DO YOU WRITE FOR:

COMMUNICATION	[ ]
ENJOYMENT	[ ]
TO INFORM	[ ]
OTHER (SPECIFY).....	

D. Numeracy

CAN YOU COUNT FROM ONE TO A HUNDRED?

YES	[ ]
NO	[ ]
WITH DIFFICULTY	[ ]

HOW OFTEN DO YOU COUNT?

DAILY	[ ]
3-5 TIMES/WEEK	[ ]
ONCE/FORTNIGHT	[ ]
RARELY OR NEVER	[ ]

DO YOU HAVE DIFFICULTY IN READING NUMBERS?

GREAT DIFFICULTY	[ ]
SOME DIFFICULTY	[ ]
LITTLE DIFFICULTY	[ ]
NO DIFFICULTY	[ ]

DO YOU HAVE DIFFICULTY IN WRITING NUMBERS?

GREAT DIFFICULTY	[ ]
SOME DIFFICULTY	[ ]
LITTLE DIFFICULTY	[ ]
NO DIFFICULTY	[ ]

HOW OFTEN DO YOU WRITE NUMBERS?

DAILY	[ ]
3-5 TIMES/WEEK	[ ]
ONCE/FORTNIGHT	[ ]
RARELY OR NEVER	[ ]

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING OPERATIONS CAN YOU DO?

	EASILY	WITH DIFFICULTY	NOT AT ALL
ADDITION	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
SUBTRACTION	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
MULTIPLICATION	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
DIVISION	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

HOW DO YOU MANAGE WITH MONEY SITUATIONS?

HANDLE THEM ALONE	[ ]
HANDLE THEM WITH HELP	[ ]
AVOID HANDLING THEM	[ ]

CAN YOU TELL THE TIME ON A CLOCK OR WATCH?

WITH GREAT DIFFICULTY	[ ]
WITH SOME DIFFICULTY	[ ]
WITH LITTLE DIFFICULTY	[ ]
WITH NO DIFFICULTY	[ ]

HOW OFTEN DO YOU MEASURE LENGTH?

DAILY	[ ]
3-5 TIMES/WEEK	[ ]
ONCE/FORTNIGHT	[ ]
RARELY OR NEVER	[ ]

WHAT DO YOU USE FOR MEASURING LENGTH?

RULER/TAPE	[ ]
STICK/STRING	[ ]
ARM/FOOT/STRIDES/LENGTH	[ ]
ALL THE ABOVE	[ ]
DO NOT MEASURE	[ ]

D BACKGROUND AND ELEMENTS FOR CONSTRUCTING AN INDIVIDUAL LITERACY ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT

1. Objective

The objective of the exercise is to obtain reliable insights into national reading problems by measuring levels of literacy in reading, writing and numeracy among school leavers up to a maximum of 30 years of age.

2. Prior Considerations

- The language for the survey will be the vernacular followed by the second language unless the national language policy indicates the need for a different order to be followed.

- The choice of topics will be selected from those of interest in the home, work or in the community.

- Test items will be fully prepared and trialled prior to the survey.

- Promotion of the survey and its importance will be conducted through the radio, press and posters.

- The survey will include respondents from both the urban and rural areas.

- During their Christmas vacations, teachers will be enlisted to conduct the survey.

- The same teachers will receive prior training to prepare them for their role as interviewers.

To ensure that the test items are not discussed in the household, multiple orders will be made of these tests.

A change of sequence will also be made to avoid memorisation of answers.

- To ensure maximum openness and honesty in the assessment, respondents may be allowed to remain anonymous.

3. Outline of the instrument

The instrument will be made of four sections with a total possible score of 35. They are:

a) Personal Information

b) Reading
- Prose
- Instructions/Directions

c) Writing
- Picture captions
- Letters, envelope addresses

d) Numeracy
- Pronunciation of written numbers
- Writing and copying numbers
- Simple calculations (addition, substraction, multiplication, division)

4. Sources for obtaining content
a) For reading assessment:

1) Prose excerpts from:

Newspapers
Weather bulletins
Shipping/maritime bulletins
Poems
Songs
Rhymes
Agricultural Brochures
Health pamphlets
Tourist brochures
Bible passages and stories
Govt. publications
Church publications
Recipes/newsletters
Advertisements
Political handouts

2) Instructions/Directions/Simple maps:

Interpretation of medicinal instructions
Usage of telephone directory
Usage of telephone (internationally)
Bus timetables
Airline Timetables
Farming instructions
Road signs
Posters
Notice of meetings
Office hours
Bus signs

b) for writing assessment:

- Picture/Caption sequencing
- Personal/Business letters
- Shopping lists
- Form filling:
  Immigration
  Birth/death certificates
  Bank deposit/withdrawal slips
  Tax forms
  Postal forms for money orders, registered mail, etc.

Customs declaration
Census forms

c) For numeracy

- examples to selected from above (e.g. shopping, postage)

INDIVIDUAL LITERACY ASSESSMENT

SECTION 1

Personal Information

Fill in the following:

Name.....(if response is not confidential).....
(surname) (first names)

Date of birth..... Sex: Male .....
Day/ Month / Year Female.....

Place of birth.....
(Village/town/city province/country/island)

Parents...../.....(if not confidential)
Mother Father

Resident at:.....
village/town/district province/country/island

Last School Attended.....Grade/Class/Form attained.....

Present Occupation.....

SECTION 2

Reading

1. Prose - multiple choice questions

An excerpt will be selected from the topics listed and not exceed 200 words in length. The passage is first to be read and then the respondent should select (circle or tick) the

Example:
A passage taken from a tourist brochure is entitled "The Design of the Samoan House of Worship".

SECTION 3

C. Writing

1. Write a caption for each of the pictures below and rearrange them in the right order.

A. Caption: _____

B. Caption: _____

C. Caption: _____

D. Caption: _____

"Conveniently located 15 minutes from downtown Apia, the Baha'i House of Worship is open daily and welcomes visitors. Worship services are held on Sundays beginning at 10.00am. For more information about visits to the House of Worship or regarding the Baha'i Faith, please contact:_____"

The respondent will read the passage twice and then answer the following question:

Question: When are services are held in the Baha'i House of Worship? (check one)

a) every day
b) on Sunday
c) whenever visitors want
d) the passage doesn't specify

2. Following instructions

a) Read the passage, then follow the instructions by drawing a map to enable a tourist staying at the Harbour Light Hotel to get to the main Post Office.

"Walk out the Harbour Light Hotel and you are immediately on the Beach Road. Turn to the left of the main entrance and keep walking. You come to a junction and a road goes off to your left. Don't take the road, but keep walking and you will cross a bridge above the Vaisigano River. Aggie Grey's Hotel will be on your left. Keep walking until you come to a second bridge across the Mulivai Stream and there on your left is the main Post Office."

b) Read the recipe for making oka (raw fish). There are two large errors in the recipe. Identify the error and correct it.

Take a kilogramme of white Tuna or `Asiasi'
Cut it into three inch cubes
Squeeze the juice of 1 lemon or lime on to the cubed `asiasi'
Marinate it for a couple of weeks.

2. Write a letter to your cousin Solo who lives in N.Z. Ask Solo to write a letter to the Immigration Department asking him to sponsor you to visit him for 3 months. Tell Solo that in his letter he must make clear that he will provide financially for you for the 3 months you are there, as well as giving you board and lodging, and making sure you are not an overstayer.

a) Write the letter here:

.....

.....

.....

.....

b) Sign the letter to Solo:

.....

.....

c) Address the envelope to Solo:

What goes here?	What goes here?
What goes here?	

SECTION 4

0. Numeracy

1. Say aloud the following numbers:

6	10	20	18	15
3	8	13	7	4
1	2	14	9	19
5	12	17	11	16

2. Write down the numbers called out orally by the surveyor:

0 2 9 2 3 8 6 9 17 4

Copy these numbers:

100,888 160,000 344 577, 936, 201

3. You have just weighed your copra and sold it for $400.00 which you plan to spend on your family. You plan to buy the following items:

3 loaves of bread - 40 sene each

2 Bottles of Vailima (beer) - $1.80 each

2 Tins of pisupo (corned beef) - $3.60 each

1 Ielavelava (sarong) - $7.50

1 Dress - $66.00

1 Tricycle - $150.90

How much money will you have left after you have bought all these things?

CHAPTER III:

LOOKING TO FUTURE ACTION:

SIX POSSIBLE COUNTRY AGENDAS

The participants were of the firm view that the Workshop should have an impact on educational development in each of the countries represented. With this concern in mind, and grouped by country, they prepared "possible agendas for action" against hidden illiteracy in each country. These "possible agendas" were drawn up following the outline.

OUTLINE FOR POSSIBLE COUNTRY AGENDAS OF ACTION

1: Current situation

a) What is already known about the nature and the extent of limited reading, writing and numeracy skills in our population.

b) Finding out more

- a strategy for finding out

- instruments:

  interview schedule for strategically placed observers

  * an assessment instrument to discover literacy levels

  * a questionnaire on literacy levels

2. Using the new information

a) Policies and programmes needed to:

- improve provision of basic literacy skills in the primary school;

- offer young people and adults with limited literacy skills remedial ("catch-up") educational opportunities outside the school;

- meet the need for comprehensive post-literacy action to maintain, develop and apply the newly acquired reading, writing and numeracy skills.

b) Responsibility for developing such policies and programmes, and potential sources of funding.

3. Making use of international cooperation.

a) Among Pacific States - making use of the core project on "Linking Island Communities" in Unesco's draft 1990-1995 Medium-Term-Plan.

b) In the Asia-Pacific region - making use of the Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL) and the Asia-Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID).

c) World-wide - becoming involved in International Literacy Year (1990) and Unesco's Plan of Action for the Elimination of Illiteracy Before the Year 2000.

A. COOK ISLANDS

1. Current Situation

No hard data is available on hidden illiteracy with regard to its nature, extent, numbers affected, and population characteristics. There are, however, known cases of children reaching grade 6 level who are not able to read or write as well as those entering College (Forms 1 & 2) who still have difficulty with reading, writing and numeracy.

These examples constitute indisputable evidence that a substantial number of school-aged children have not fully mastered basic literacy skills in the early primary levels. "Remedial Classes" or "Home Room Classes" have been set up in an attempt to bring these students up to an acceptable standard.

According to informants in situations that require literacy skills (e.g. immigration, public helath, labour department and agricultural extension officials), people have been observed who had difficulty in completing forms or in reading and following instructions. Both situations, then, underscore the need to find out more.

It is the intention of the Cook Islands Department of Education to conduct a survey based on a random sampling of literacy levels. It will proceed island by island, beginning with Rarotonga, then go to the Southern Group Islands and lastly the Northern Islands (which are widely dispersed and thinly populated). The survey will be carried out using a scheduled interview. To assess functional literacy among school leavers up to 30 years, a special test will be constructed.

2. HOW THE INFORMATION WILL BE USED

a) At primary school level

- review policy of social promotion

- improve on existing language programmes to promote mastery of literacy skills and to promote good reading habits.

b) For young people and adults

- depending on the group affected, appropriate Government Departments, citizens' groups, and traditional or religious bodies will be called on to mount remedial programmes.

c) For post-literacy action

- implement the policy of opening school libraries to the community after school hours.

- encourage University of the South Pacific extension centres to offer both academic and basic/recreational courses covering a variety of topics and interests.

- encourage those responsible for producing radio programmes which provide information related to Agriculture, Public Health, Conservation, Education, etc to follow up the broadcast with written copies of the script.

- Provision of written materials in the vernacular (for both information and pleasure).

d) The longer view

If the data reveals significant levels of hidden illiteracy, a strong case will be put to the Government to provide the means to the Ministry of Education to mount remedial programmes or to provide technical assistance to other bodies which interact more closely with the given target group.

3. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

a) Among Pacific States

- exchange (regional workshops or by correspondence) of information on successful programmes for dealing with the various faces of hidden illiteracy.

- provision of financial and technical assistance through the Unesco Office in Samoa to support national programmes aimed at dealing with this problem.

b) Asia-Pacific

- participation in meetings of APPEAL and APEID on literacy campaigns and methods;

- dissemination of relevant statistics/publications on literacy programmes and actions;

- involve regional bodies by seeking their support for national literacy programmes through the provision of financial and technial assistance.

c) Worldwide

- dissemination of information on I.L.Y. 1990 (posters, tapes, pamphlets, etc...)

B. FIJI

1. CURRENT SITUATION

Literacy in Fiji is estimated at 80 percent of the population using Class 4 Education as a benchmark. Approximately half of its population is Indian and half ethnic Fijian. The 1976 census shows an 86 percent literacy rate for Fijians and a 71 percent literacy rate for Indians. 1/

In research carried out by in 1959 2/ it was found that 70 percent of Fijian adults claimed literacy in their own language. According to research on the literacy rates of women in Fiji in 1974, it was found that Indian women have the lowest literacy rates - approximately 61 percent while the Fijian women have 98 percent. 3/

1/ (Ali and Gunasekera, 1982:52)

2/ R.S. Adam

3/ Note from the editor: nothing is known of the sampling techniques or the questionnaire construction but the figures are at best indicative, both being probably too high.

Literacy levels can be expected to rise with the government's aim of eventually providing every child in Fiji with ten years of education. However, a number of problems persist, two examples of which are:

- Those living in the rural areas have little access to reading and writing materials.

- Fijian communities place more emphasis on religion and religious activities than on the education of their children. They will more readily make efforts to raise funds to build a new church than to buy more reading and writing materials for their village or provincial schools.

These two factors suggest the existence of heretofore underestimated or unsuspected hidden illiteracy. One strategy for finding out more entails the little cost since the fact finding network is already in place. It entails mobilizing all the country's teachers on a full-scale fact-finding mission. The three instruments developed by the workshop are felt, with suitable modifications, and refinements, to be of great potential use.

Since Fiji is a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual society, the instruments would have to be translated into all languages spoken in the country: Fijian, Rotuman, English, Hindu, Uradu, Tamil, Telagu, Gujarati, Chinese, Banaban/Gilbertese, Samoan and Tongan.

2. HOW THE INFORMATION WILL BE USED

The country must adopt an official language policy. Concretely, it must decide whether tri-lingual teaching should continue or be substituted by a single national language. "Book Floods," "Shared Book" and "Guided Book" reading projects must be extended and become self-sustaining programmes even when overseas funding has stopped. Annual budgetary allocations must be set at suitable levels.

A special programme could usefully be set up for young people and adults with limited literacy skills and be known as "Drop in for Drop-outs". Resource people could be drawn from the ranks of doctors, nurses, teachers, and the like.

3. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Pacific States: ideas and research findings must be shared to strengthen national activities and help cut down on repetition and wasted efforts.

Asia-Pacific region: an awareness programme is needed to increase understanding among the Asian countries of the special needs of the Pacific Islands. It is believed that each side has something to learn from and contribute to the other.

World-wide context: as above.

C. THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

1. CURRENT SITUATION

Both parents and educators have expressed general concern about achievement in the Primary School system. Questions are being asked about the present system which many compare unfavourably to the previous one. Before, those who had completed primary schooling were thought to be able to read and write as well as generally acquainted with basic numeracy. Today children appear to have more difficulties with these skills. It is not known whether these impressions are well-founded.

Despite this continuing concern, little real awareness exists about the nature and extent of limited reading, writing and numeracy. Moreover, while uneasiness about the current situation is generalized, it is not yet sufficiently acute to prompt immediate remedial action. Clearly, more information is needed about the population characteristics before seeking financial assistance to encourage literacy (standard 6 drop-outs - 10years+; or form 3 drop-outs - 14years+).

In the context of Solomon Islands, it is not necessary to guess about the existence of hidden illiteracy since it is known that some absolute illiteracy exists. Instead, the concern is with the nature and extent of the problem which is caused by the inefficiencies in planning and training for the existing school system.

To find out more about this situation, a "tracer" study is necessary selecting a sample of Standard Six drop-outs dating 5 or 6 years back. The purpose of such an exercise would be to find out where they are and what they are doing. Having identified these individuals, a survey would be conducted using variations of the assessment instrument and questionnaire on literacy levels developed by the workshop.

2. HOW THE INFORMATION WILL BE USED

Whether or not new information becomes available, there are presently two areas in the normal schooling system which require clearly-formulated Government policies to prompt specific actions:

- a policy in literacy which would accomodate continuing dropouts in Standard Six, and

- a policy that would cater for post literacy action to enable continuing application of reading, writing and numeracy.

Policies already exist which provide for more emphasis on primary schooling efficiency and remedial programmes for young people and adults through Community education.

a) Programmes: Primary School

- A new direction and emphasis on literacy teaching must be incorporated into the teacher training programme in the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education in order to strengthen teacher awareness of the need to lay the foundation for literacy at the primary level.

- More opportunities for comprehensive reading, writing, and numeracy must be built into the existing primary school syllabus.

- Regular workshops must be organized at the Curriculum Unit to promote the production of locally made materials for literacy purposes.

-Radio should be more extensively utilised to teach or reinforce instruction in reading, writing and numeracy sessions for pre-school and primary school children.

b) Adult Education

- The functions of the existing Community Education Division should be broadened within the Ministry of Education so that appropriate courses for reading, writing and numeracy can be planned for all adults.

- teachers of the planned courses should be identified and made aware of the need for literacy at this level.

- The Curriculum Unit should be involved in the production of the necessary resources.

- Secondary school facilities should be utilised in running these courses for six weeks twice a year.

c) Post Literacy

- The Curriculum Unit should be called upon to assist in the production of literacy materials which would require the population concerned to read or to write for information needed to carry out their functions or responsibilities more efficiently. e.g. farmers, parents, small businessmen and shop keepers, and the like.

- Book centres should be gradually established in primary schools since they are accessible to everyone living in the village served by the schools. Care and maintenance is generally better in primary schools than in the villages.

- Special radio programmes may be produced which are specially oriented to this particular population.

All policies and programmes will be mounted by the Ministry of Education through the Education Centre. Possible sources of Funding are: Recurrent Grant; Development Capital

(AID); Unesco; Community effort.

3. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

The battle against hidden illiteracy should be waged at both the macro and micro levels, and all knowledge and potential support which might be of use to the Solomon Islands should be tapped, within the Pacific Region, the Asia-Pacific Region, or the world at large.

D. TOKELAU

1. CURRENT SITUATION

Very little, if anything is known about the nature and extent of limited reading, writing and numeracy skills in Tokelau. One can, however, assume that problems exist because:

- reading materials in the vernacular language are very limited;

- some people demonstrate a need for assistance in situations where literacy is required;

- Tokelauans are regularly exposed to at least three languages;

- no previous attempt has been made to survey the situation.

- Tokelau is extremely isolated in terms of any communication with the rest of the world, including even Samoa, where its Administrative Offices are located.

- All the usual strategies for finding out more about the situation are theoretically applicable but enormously constrained by the fact that the three islands making up Tokelau are connected with each other only by a monthly boat or by daily radio contact.

2. HOW THE INFORMATION WILL BE USED

a) Policies and programmes

- primary schools
  teacher training
  internal workshops
  parent education and involvement

- Out-of-school youth and adult education
  organised adult and youth training centres
  Book production in the vernacular language.

b) National responsibility and source of funding

- Following the collection and analysis of the data; a comprehensive report should go to policy makers, education personnel, various Heads of Departments. Sources of funds to mount remedial programmes include the national budget, fund-raising in community, the UNDP Country Programme, and possibly the Commonwealth Secretariat.

3. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

a) Pacific: South Pacific Commission */
b) Asia-Pacific: APPEAL and APEID
c) World: UNDP and other UN Agencies; Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation.

E. TONGA

1. CURRENT SITUATION

No more than a general, even if enlightened, impression exists of the hidden illiteracy situation in Tonga. No proper survey has ever been conducted because "hidden illiteracy" is not being considered as a significant problem by senior decision-makers. Moreover, it is not listed among the national priorities for the next 5 Year Development Plan. To find out more, the assessment instrument and scheduled interviews, translated into Tongan, should be used to conduct a national household survey.

2. HOW THE INFORMATION WILL BE USED

a) Policies and Programmes

(i) for Primary Schools

- produce more reading material both in vernacular first and then in English.

- upgrade Teacher Training on basicl literacy skills.

- train specialist teachers on basic literacy skills to deal with remedial work for slow learners.

(ii) for young people and adults with limited literacy skills

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*/ Note from the Editor: the SPC is no longer involved in any literacy activities and even the Tate Reading Series has been handed over to a private distributor.

- offer programmes in the Community Development and Training Centre (CDTC).

- set up libraries in communities, with more publications in the vernacular and in English to suit the interest of the readers.

- train young people to develop and produce publications in the vernacular language and in English to suit readers with limited literacy skills.

(iii) <u>for post-literacy readers</u>

- have a consistent supply/collection of reading material on various topics of interest for community youth centres or libraries.

- offer programmes in community youth centres or libraries for literacy skills e.g. reading and writing poems, play productions and performances, etc.

b) <u>National responsibilities and funding sources</u>

Those most appropriate in Tonga to develop policies and programmes relating to hidden illiteracy include:

- Officer-in-charge of Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs.
- Director of Community, Development and Training Centre
- Church Leaders
- Youth Group Leaders
- Leaders of Women's Groups
- Village/Town Officers
- Nobles
- Police Training School
- Politicians.

Potential sources of funding include:

- UNESCO,(APPEAL, APEID, Funds-in-Trust)
- ADAB
- N.Z. BILATERAL AID
- C.F.T.C.
- HIGH COMMISSIONS EMBASSIES OF AUSTRALIA, NZ, TAIWAN, JAPAN ETC.
- WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
- FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY
- WORLD CHRISTIAN AID (LONDON)
- TONGANS LIVING OVERSEAS
- LOCAL BUSINESSES AND FIRMS
- FUND-RAISING DRIVES

3. <u>INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION</u>

a) <u>Among Pacific States</u>

- Training of people

- Attachments
- Exchange schemes
- Pooling resources and mutually beneficial copyright arrangements

b) In the Asia-Pacific Region

- as above

c) World-Wide

- to seek a reduction in printing costs, arrange for overseas printing not only within the Pacific (e.g. Fiji) but in Singapore and Thailand, and even in Sweden and the Socialist countries of Eastern Europe.

F. WESTERN SAMOA

1. CURRENT SITUATION

No statistics on hidden illiteracy exist in Western Samoa; but a general impression can be drawn from examination results and the experiences of colleagues. It has been clearly established that there is a problem of hidden illiteracy among some post-secondary students (17 years upwards). Hence, there is evidence of hidden illiteracy in the earlier levels as well as among those who have left school.

To find out more, a survey of schools at all levels, Government and Mission, as well of other Government Departments and NGO's should be conducted. The instruments developed by the Workshop, translated into Samoan for certain applications, are considered useful for the purpose though minor modifications are expected to be necessary.

2. HOW THE INFORMATION WILL BE USED

a) Policies and Programmes

- A National Literacy Policy is considered as an indispensable prior condition if schools are to receive the necessary support to improve the teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills.

- An increased emphasis must be put on the acquision of literacy skills through:

  - book floods
  - book production (handmade or printed)
  - shared book experience
  - book awareness
  - story telling

- inservice teacher training

- so that young people and adults with limited literacy skills can be given remedial educational opportunities outside the school. It is essential that those key people who come in contact with them in the community should be alerted to the problems of hidden illiteracy which is a problem which ultimately concerns everyone: an illiterate adult is a potential burden to his/her family, friends and community.

- so that a comprehensive post-literacy action can be taken to maintain, develop and apply the newly acquired literacy and numeracy skills of the neo-literates

e.g. Writing Contests
Story Telling
Book Production
Rural Libraries/Mobile Libraries
Drama/Art
Recitals - Poetry/Music
Post literacy courses
Radio Programmes
Health/Agriculture Pamphlets etc.

b) Responsibilities for developing policies, programmes and funding support

- Policy: Policy and Planning committees and Ministers.

- Programmes: A committee should be appointed to develop these programmes. The committee should be comprised of people with expertise in literacy and they should be free to co-opt people from other organisations (both Government and non-government) where literacy and numeracy skills are required in their daily business.

- Sources of Funding: Appeals must be made not only increased Government spending but to the local community and the business sector as well. Aid donors can be expected to be necessary.

3. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

a) Among Pacific States: exchange and share ideas for mutual help and to keep up with the progress and developments within the Pacific Region. Human and other resources should be shared where possible and beneficial as well.

b) In the Asia-Pacific Region: the Pacific States can benefit from greater contact with the Asian countries which, though their problems are different, are thought to have longer experience in dealing with the problem of hidden illiteracy and valuable advice and assistance to give on the subject.

c) World-wide: as above.

CHAPTER IV:

TOWARD FULL LITERACY IN THE PACIFIC

"THE APIA DECLARATION"

At the conclusion of its work, and in addition to the possible national agendas for action setforth in Chapter III above), the participants prepared a formal statement on the situation and prospects of the Pacific region as concerns hidden illiteracy and literacy and requested the Unesco Chief of Mission to ensure the widest possible distribution. The text reads as follows:

We, fifteen educators representing six Pacific countries at a Unesco "Regional Workshop on Youth and Adults with Limited Literacy Skills", are deeply concerned, even worried.

Despite generally high rates of school enrolment in our region, a relatively large number of Pacific young people and adults seem unable to use reading, writing and numeracy with ease and meaning in their daily lives.

To be sure, this problem of what we have called "hidden illiteracy" is not so serious as the absolute illiteracy that affects one-fifth of the world's adults. Also, the crippling effects of limited literacy skills are cushioned, among our populations, by the still-vital traditions of oral culture and by mutual assistance within families and communities.

It must be said, too, that reliable statistics about hidden illiteracy are lacking; we do not know with precision the full dimensions of the problem.

Nevertheless, our shared experience indicates that limited literacy skills - probably mainly caused by inadequate primary schooling, and relapse into illiteracy through disuse of reading and writing - do hamper personal as well as social and economic development in areas such as communication, agriculture, fishing, commerce and health.

Just as undereducated and uninformed people are particularly vulnerable to such contagions as AIDS, so too, illiteracy makes it more difficult to defend cherished Pacific values and practices - such as the use of vernacular languages which, alone, can express our real selves - against certain unwanted encroachments of economic development.

Faced with this worrisome situation, we asked ourselves: what should be done?

An urgent first step will be to find out more, to gather the information required - country by country and in the region as a whole - to define with precision the existence, extent, nature, characteristics, causes and effects of hidden illiteracy in the Pacific.

Secondly, we need to develop and implement, where appropriate, policies and programmes for the firm support of vernacular languages side-by-side with better use of English as the major medium of international communication in the Pacific.

Thirdly, we need to intensify efforts to improve the role of primary education in imparting basic literacy skills. Here, the awareness, information and training of teachers will be crucial, as will greatly increased production in the region of books for classroom use.

Fourthly, outside the school, much needs to be done to provide young people and adults with remedial educational opportunities enabling them to catch up, stay abreast and advance where reading, writing and numeracy are concerned.

Fifthly, many countries will want to face squarely the great need for across-the-board post-literacy policies and measures designed to help their citizens maintain, develop and apply basic literacy skills. Examples include: promotion of reading, improvement of Pacific publishing capacity, and urban and rural libraries. A joint effort is required, with governments leading, but also enjoying the full participation, initiative and creativity of other partners such as non-governmental organizations, youth, women's and other community groups, and business circles, whose enlightened self-interest as regards literacy is clear to see.

All of this will cost money already in short supply; who is to pay?

Instead of stretching out our hand to overseas donors, let us first of all plunge them into our own pockets and seek to find a maximum of resources within our countries and region. Many examples show that with top level support from our leaders, and with imaginative measures (walkathons, concerts, flag selling, etc.), surprisingly large amounts of funds can be raised at home. People have even been willing to go without a meal to help out in times of disaster and for other worthy causes.

To be eradicated, hidden illiteracy requires that we use our ingenuity to uncover hidden resources. What, for example, of the thousands of senior secondary school pupils in the Pacific? Could they not be mobilised massively to teach, to inform, to raise funds?

In regard to resource generation, the churches already have a long-standing commitment to education. We appeal to them to redouble their efforts to raise awareness among parishoners about

hidden illiteracy, to provide basic instruction to children, young people and adults alike, and to produce and disseminate interesting and attractive books, brochures and periodicals.

Overseas donors will, of course, be more than welcome to help out in the struggle for full literacy in our region and it is hoped that they will make what would be an excellent investment. Training would be a priority here: training for example in layout and printing, graphics, illustration, and other professions needed to spread reading.

This workshop has been a good example of the extent to which neighbourly sharing of ideas and information can be productive: it is self-evident that regional institutions of various kinds can be more fully involved in promoting such exchanges. The Pacific countries should, for example, play a greater role in Unesco's Asia-Pacific programme of Education for All (APPEAL) and its Asia-Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID). Within our area, the Unesco Office for the Pacific States Office (Apia) should continue and increase its welcome efforts to facilitate exchanges among our countries on hidden illiteracy.

"Linking Island Communities" is the provisional title of Core Project Z of the draft Unesco Medium-Term Plan for 1990-1995. We salute the prominence given to archipelagic situations like ours in this important document. But we also urge the Unesco Secretariat in preparing the draft of this document, to make explicit reference to the struggle against hidden illiteracy and for full literacy as one main theme of this Project. We, in the Pacific, feel we have much to gain and much to give on this subject, through cooperation with other island regions that have high schooling rates, such as the Carribean.

Finally, with a view to ensuring equal access to Unesco's services and to its exchange networks on literacy, we urge t ose Pacific countries that are not yet Member States of Unesco to give serious consideration to joining the Organization.

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In this Statement, we have enumerated out possible actions that are both necessary and realistic; they are building blocks for the construction of a Pacific Agenda on Hidden Illiteracy.

What better time to begin implementation of these proposals than between now and 1990, which will be International Literacy Year. That year will also see the launching of a ten-year Plan of Action to Eliminate Illiteracy from the world by the Year 2000.

Is this a possible goal for our region? Our unequivocal answer is "Yes".

A fully literate Pacific by the turn of the century - that is the challenge; it should also be the quest of each Pacific nation; it is, in any event, our personal commitment.

Apia, Western Samoa

17 May 1988

ANNEXE I

1. COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES	FUNCTIONS	ADDRESS
Cook Islands		
Cecilia Kave	Senior Curriculum Adviser	Department of Education
Tapurau Short	Curriculum Adviser English - FI&II	P.O. Box 97 Rarotonga
Helen Syme	Primary School Teacher	Cook Islands
Fiji		
Sulueti Bale	High School Teacher	Ministry of Education
Sereima Daunivuka	Education Officer CDU/English - Primary Schools	Suva, Fiji
Solo Vosaicake	Senior Education Officer (Special Education)	
Solomon Islands		
Joseph Nielson	Deputy Headmaster St. Josephs Secondary School	Ministry of Education P.O. Box G28
Walter Ramo	Under-Secretary (Professional)	Honiara Solomon Islands
Tokelau		
Keli Kalolo	Exams/Curriculum Devt. Officer	Office for Tokelau Affairs P.O. Box 865
Sister Juliana Perez	Education Officer	Apia Western Samoa
Tonga		
Siutaula Cocker	Primary Division	Ministry of Education
Jeffrey Taufa	Senior Education Officer CDU/English	P.O. Box 61 Nukualofa Tonga
Western Samoa		
Margaret Ah Tune	Vice-Principal W.S. Teachers College Primary Division	Department of Education Malifa Apia
May Saaga	School Inspector	Western Samoa
Livi Tanuvasa	School Inspector	

2. RESOURCE PERSONS

Arthur Gillette	Programme Specialist Literacy Section Unesco Hq. Paris	Unesco ED/PLA 7 Place de Fontenoy Paris 75700 France
Francis Mangubhai	Fellow, Institute of Education	University of the South Pacific P.O. Box 1168 Suva Fiji.

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3. OBSERVERS

Rebecca Biron	Peace Corps Volunteer Catholic Teacher Trainer	U.S. Peace Corps Private Bag Apia Western Samoa
Toleafoa U. Petaia	Peace Corps Language Trainer	As above.

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4. SECRETARIAT

Peter Higginson	Chief of Mission Unesco Office for the Pacific States	Box 5766 Matautu P.O. Apia Western Samoa
Peti Heiderbrandt	Secretary	As Above
Taigaga Palepoi	Clerk/Driver	As above

ANNEXE II

EXCERPTS FROM OPENING ADDRESS OF HON. PATU AFAESE
MINISTER OF EDUCATION, WESTERN SAMOA

I have said earlier that I am not an Educator by Formal training but one does not need specialized training to see that our educational foundations are far less solid than many of us had previously concluded on the basis of our much-vaunted high school-enrollment rates. Examples of the inability to read and the penalities of that short-coming are all over the place if anyone cares to look and be honest with him or herself.

There is the young adult who, when charged with some infraction and hauled into court, is found unable to comprehend simple written texts having to do with his rights and obligations; - Sunday School Teachers who complain of children who are incapable of reading bible lessons; - Agricultural Extension Workers who discover that the leaflets they hand out are useless; - Matais running for political office who use printed campaign fliers handed out on the street and fail to connect with some of their constituency through this medium; - Public Health officers who having left behind printed materials about health and nutrition, personal hygiene, sanitation and childcare, come up against a brick wall because their message never got beyond the printed page; - or the illiterate youngster who emigrated to New Zealand and became a shame for his own countr and an expensive social charge for his adoptive one.... and th re are many more.

You will appreciate my nervousness when I view the tendency of some educators to want to pour all their resources into the horizontal extension of education into new subject areas and to make use of increasingly complex and expensive new technology; and into the vertical extension to post-secondary institutions. It should by now be obvious to us all that cracks are showing up all over the place in the Foundations on which the whole edifice is constructed. By "Foundations", I refer of course to Primary and eventually Junior-Secondary School.

As Minister of Education, I feel it is logical for my staff and indeed the public, to expect that I would spreadhead efforts to redress this situation. Indeed such is my firm intention. But my hands are completely tied until I know precisely where they shoe pinches and exactly what is required in the way of resources, both human and finacial. As of today, I don't have those facts.

No Minister of Education can galvanize public opinion, convincea disbelieving cabinet, and woo an often sceptical, if not openly hostile Minister of Finance without some hard data. Every educator knows there is a problem but here in the Pacific it has never been clearly defined in a manner enabling us all to be sure we are talking about the same phenomenon. Remember, if we can't describe it, we will never know for sure if the solutions we come up with are going to hit the target.

Nor has the problem ever been analyzed so we're sure about the principal causes and about the precise part each plays; and finally, we haven't a single solitary idea about the true dimensions of the problem: How many kids are we talking about? How many adults? Who are they? Where are the main clusters situated geographically and academically? How many years of formal education did they have?

Until we - the Pacific Islands Ministers of Education - have answers to questions of this sort, we cannot put up a credible case to our cabinets for increased resources to attack the problem.

It will unquestionably be a tough two weeks ahead of you but I can see by who you are and the functions you exercise in your home countries as well as by your tentative agenda, that you will be demanding of yourselves and of your two resource people. You will, however, be rewarded for your labours because, I repeat, you are pioneering a really major process. Indeed, this event is, I feel convinced, going to send ripples far and wide...

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